31st October 1935]

Communal representation in the cadre of assistant panchayat officers.

* 350 *Q.*—Mr. M. DEVADASAN: Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) what the total number of the assistant panchayat officers that are working in the province is; and

(*b*) to what communities they belong?

A.—(*a*) & (*b*) Of a total number of thirty-seven assistant panchayat officers sanctioned to district boards (vide Annexure to G.O. No. 2216, L. & M., dated the 11th June 1935, appended to the answer to question No. 61 delivered on 6th August 1935), the post sanctioned to the Nilgiris District Board has since been kept in abeyance as there is at present no work for an officer in that district. The appointments to these posts vest in the presidents of district boards concerned and Government have no information as to the number of the officers actually working now, or the communities to which they belong.

Mr. M. DEVADASAN:—"The answer says that 'appointment to these posts vests in the presidents of district boards' and therefore the Government have no information. Will the Government call for the information in view of the fact that the Government have undertaken to observe communal rotation in regard to services under the local boards?"

The Hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"It is not possible for Government to obtain information in regard to all classes of appointments made by the presidents of district boards and local boards. I may also state that in regard to assistant panchayat officers, a good many of the posts recently sanctioned are being filled by men who are already in the service of the district boards and those occupying posts of rural reconstruction officers in panchayat areas, etc."

B. POCKER SAHIB Bahadur:—"Is the principle of these communal Government Order applicable to these appointments?"

The Hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"As far as the officers are concerned, the communal Government Order is not being applied."

Duties of district panchayat officers.

* 351 *Q.*—Mr. K. A. NACHIYAPPA GOUNDER: Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) what the work assigned to the district panchayat officers is;

(*b*) whether a copy of the order assigning work to them will be placed on the table;

(*c*) under whom are they to work;

(*d*) whether it is a fact that they are given other work also by the presidents of district boards, which is quite outside their purview;

(*e*) whether any complaint or reference has been made by any of the district panchayat officers in this behalf; and

(*f*) if so, from whom and in what way they have been disposed of?

A.—(*a*) The various items of work assigned to the district panchayat officers relate to—

(i) Organization and supervision of panchayat boards;

(ii) Enquiry into the defects, maladministration, etc., of panchayat boards and guidance in all matters pertaining to their general administration; and

(iii) Conduct of elections to panchayat boards.

(*b*) The Government have not issued any orders defining the duties of these officers beyond stating that they were to guide and supervise the work of panchayats on the spot. A copy [a] of G.O. No. 3139, L. & M., dated the 9th August 1932, is laid on the table.

(*c*) District panchayat officers are working under the immediate supervision of the Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards subject to the control of the Local Government.

(*d*), (*e*) & (*f*) The Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards who was consulted in the matter reports that district panchayat officers are not given by presidents of district boards, work outside their legitimate sphere and that no complaint or reference had been made so far by any of the district panchayat officers in this behalf.

Mr. K. A. Nachiyappa Gounder:—" May I know, Sir, whether it is not possible to define the duties of panchayat officers in clear terms so that they may be helpful in promoting the better supervision of the panchayats? "

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—" From the experience so far gained, the present position is quite clear. There seems to be no need to further define their duties."

Mr. K. A. Nachiyappa Gounder:—" May I know, Sir, what duties are assigned to the assistant panchayat officers who have been recently appointed? "

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—" The assistant panchayat officers generally assist the district panchayat officers."

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[a] Printed as Appendix VI on pages 326–328 infra.